



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

May 12, 2000

S. 1482

National Marine Sanctuaries Enhancement Act of 2000

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
on April 13, 2000*

SUMMARY

Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that implementing S. 1482 would cost the federal government \$172 million over the 2000-2005 period. The bill could affect direct spending and governmental receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. CBO estimates, however, that any effects on receipts or direct spending would be minimal. S. 1482 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no significant costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

S. 1482 would amend the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, which authorizes and governs the National Marine Sanctuaries System (NMSS) administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The amendments would streamline the process for designating new sites for the NMSS and strengthen existing enforcement measures.

The bill would authorize the appropriation of \$210 million over the 2000-2005 period for operation of the NMSS, including \$30 million for 2000, \$32 million for 2001, \$34 million for 2002, \$36 million for 2003, \$38 million for 2004, and \$40 million for 2005. For fiscal year 2000, \$26 million has been appropriated for the system to date.

In addition to amendments made to streamline or enhance the NMSS program and to authorize appropriations for the system, other provisions of the bill would:

- Impose criminal penalties on persons who interfere with investigations into violations of laws that protect marine sanctuary resources;
- Change the way NOAA sets fees for special use permits at sanctuaries;

- Allow the agency to apply for, accept, and use grant funds from state, local, and regional government agencies; and
- Authorize the agency to accept and use donations from nonprofit groups (under cooperative agreements) and others in carrying out activities at national estuaries.

Other provisions of the bill, most of which would make technical amendments to the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, would have little or no effect on the federal budget.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 1482 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION ^a						
NMSS Spending Under Current Law						
Budget Authority ^b	26	0	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	21	7	3	2	0	0
Proposed Changes						
Authorization Level	4	32	34	36	38	40
Estimated Outlays	3	26	32	35	37	39
NMSS Spending Under S. 1482						
Authorization Level	30	32	34	36	38	40
Estimated Outlays	24	33	35	37	37	39

a. CBO estimates that enactment of this bill also could affect direct spending and receipts, but any amounts would be negligible.

b. The 2000 level is the amount appropriated for that year for the NMSS.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that the entire amounts authorized for all activities will be appropriated in each fiscal year. Outlays are based on historical spending patterns for the affected programs.

Several provisions of the bill could affect governmental receipts or offsetting receipts (a credit against direct spending). Because all of the changes in such receipts would be offset by equal changes in direct spending, none of these provisions would have any net effect on the federal budget. Moreover, most such changes would be negligible. These provisions are:

- Section 8, which would impose criminal penalties on persons who interfere with the investigation by authorized officers into violations of laws that protect marine sanctuary resources;
- Section 11, which could result in lower receipts by allowing NOAA to accept in-kind contributions in lieu of certain fees at marine sanctuaries;
- Section 12, which would allow NOAA to accept and use grants provided by state, local, or regional government agencies; and
- Section 17, which would clarify that NOAA may authorize the use of certain NMSS symbols by others helping the agency to benefit the system.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

The Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act sets up pay-as-you-go procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or receipts. Several provisions of S. 1482 could affect direct spending and governmental receipts. CBO estimates that these provisions would have no significant effect on the federal budget in any year.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

S. 1482 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no significant costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On July 1, 1999, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 1243, the National Marine Sanctuaries Enhancement Act of 1999, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on June 9, 1999. H.R. 1243 would reauthorize the National Estuarine Research Reserve System as well as the NMSS and would authorize money for new construction activities at NMSS sites. In addition, the House bill would authorize the appropriation of \$26 million annually for ongoing NMSS activities, which is less than the amounts in the Senate bill.

ESTIMATE PREPARED BY:

Federal Costs: Deborah Reis

Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Victoria Heid Hall

Impact on the Private Sector: Natalie Tawil

ESTIMATE APPROVED BY:

Peter H. Fontaine

Depute Assistant Director for Budget Analysis